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PRISM

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PRISM

William Peace University Literary Magazine 2014

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With Eyes like Sapphires

Taylor Sferrazza

Amongst the soil, in the deep;
There is a soul beyond reason.
Of purest form and gentlest virtue.
She stays despite her will.
Amongst the glass, stone, and mystery
There is an entity of amity.
Her hair the roots,
Her tears the drink of life.

Amongst the soil, in the deep;
There is a soul beyond reason.
Twisted in her roots are the hopes,
Dreams, and serenity of the past.
Amongst the turmoil and quakes;
She sees the chaos and conflict.
She sees the soul of the world,
She sees it in the eyes of the outcast.

Amongst the soil, in the deep;
There is a soul beyond reason.
She lies in wait with bated breath,
As patient as the mildew and mirth.
Amongst the decay and madness,
She awaits for the resurrection of sanity.

A Prayer For You

Darean Polk

Beloved, Darling—Love of my life:
I care for you beyond measures,
And I d go through hell and a lot of nouns.
I d do anything and a lot of verbs.
I d be miserable and a lot of adjectives for you.
I think about you more than what time can give,
More than my brain is capable of.
It makes space just for you.
My heart pounds like a jack rabbit,
But slowly when the trepidation comes of losing you,
My heart has its own drum for you.
I love you more than a sagacious man knows knowledge,
Than a sacrosanct person knows religion,
I love you epitomes or imperfection,
I love you for you.
My whole life is surrounded by memories of you,
Everything I do, you invade my privacy.
It is ominous to my life to live without you, so I pray.
I pray a prayer that time does not deter your love,
That we never become aloof through time,
I pray a prayer that our love will not be transient.
I pray for your health, your overall well-being,
That your life be full of triumph, and that God bless you.
I even pray for those you love- if not me that you are happy.
Every night I lay in bed before I sleep,
I pray a prayer for you.

The Long Road

Brigitte Tondeur

It is a long road home.

It does not matter what road you take
There shall always be twists and turns
No matter how long the road may be.

You walk it in the snow,
You walk it in the flowering meadow,
You walk it with the sun high in the sky,
You walk it in the shade of the changing leaves,
You walk it for years to come.

Your soul is pure,
A light in your heart that cannot be tainted
It will guide you
Alongside the Road you choose.

Your heart may falter,
For we are not divine,
But your soul will never leave you behind,
Even when you have returned to the Earth

You walk it in the snow,
You walk it in the flowering meadow,
You walk it with the sun high in the sky,
You walk it in the shade of the changing leaves,
You walk it for many years to come.

The Road is ahead of us
It may be long,
But it is what you make it out to be in the end.

Untitled

anonymous

It s not quite noon yet.
It s bright, yet calm outside as everyone goes about their business – content in this life.
Down the creek they go, not alone – they ve always been in this together.
So typical, but they wouldn t have it any other way.
They didn t know it could be any other way.
Through the woods they glide, suddenly unsure of their surroundings.
It s darker now, and they can t seem to remember how they got here.
These trees are unfamiliar.
The lights have dimmed.
They re lost.
This place they once knew so well has become a stranger to them.
Looking around, searching for reassurance, they can t seem to recognize each other.
They re lost.
Away from the trees they run, afraid to stay, yet anxious to see what lies beyond this once familiar place.
Running from something they can t identify,
All they can do is trust that this path leads them back home – unaware they have no home to return to.
They look around one by one, now acknowledging the absence of the strangers they once knew so well.
They re lost. They have nowhere to go.
Through the darkness they re unable to see.
Blinded by the absence of the others they ve come to forget.
All alone, they re lost.
With nowhere to turn, they forget to try.
They re lost – unable to see these familiar strangers.
They re all lost, but none of them can see these familiar strangers oh so close – alone, yet in this together.

Influenza

Hannah Murphy

She ate like someone who had just been vaccinated.
Her care vacated
when she realized how overrated,
misconstrued and baited
the information was to the masses of people who had all been placated,
their minds violated,
with eyes on the television, dilated.
She knew that common sense was annihilated
as she licked savory juices from her finger tips,
sauce still lingering on her rose mouth and soft lips.
The government still sought the master apothocary
while reminding everyone they were still unsanitary.
You re only as brave as the immunizations make you,
but we survive on their lies because we have to.

Remember Me

Christina Hawes

Like a water current over the seas,
I don t want to be the sea sand.
It s washed away
Like a flame, fire starting.
I don t want to be the house
That burned down
To the ground.
Like the day in life of my biography,
I don t want to be the name
That is soon
To be forgotten.
Like an old girlfriend,
I don t want to be the new one
Soon to be replaced
Like the tragic death of a future dreamer,
I don t want to be the little girl.
Whose dreams could never be known.
I want to fight my fears
That made me to scared to have faith.
Let me be the girl who stole everyone s heart.
Let me dream.
Let me fly.
Let me go.
Just promise me this one thing:
Say that you will remember me

Words of Wisdom

Kayla Zsido

Let your smile shine bright,
and your mind ever open.
keep a helping hand in sight, and a heart that s always hoping. never say the words “I can t , never let them see you cry. never wish your days away, never give up until you try. always remember to stay true, to the person that you are.
when you have faith in yourself, no distance is too far.

Poomse

Taylor Sferrazza

Power, Grace, Eloquence—
Flowing through the air
Like slow moving torpedoes.
Each movement comes naturally,
Without thought.
Clenching and unclenching,
Muscles coexisting,
One movement.
Courtesy, Integrity, Perseverance,
Self Control, Indomitable Spirit—
Words that take over one s life,
Starting with the beginning
And never ending.

Snow

Brigitte Tondeur

Winter
Yet life still on the Earth,
For we are all her children
And she will replenish our spirits when spring returns.

Crystals fall from the gray heavens
Blanketing the Earth in white,
A pristine pure powder,
As if it s starlight.

Children of the Earth take shelter
And tell stories of old
Knowing she will replenish their spirits when spring returns.

Leafless trees lie dormant
With powder laying heavily on their branches,
As if they are carrying the weight of the world.

They wait
They wait in the cold
For the warm rays to peak through the heavens
And replenish their strength for seasons to come.

The harshness of the world is cold and bleak,
And yet life still clings onto the Earth
Knowing we are her children
And replenish our spirits when the rays of light shine upon us.

Time

Sara Johnson

Time is an enigma
Sometimes slow and steady
Sometimes fast and ready
Its mood swings decide its speed
At least that s what we believe
It gives and takes away
You cannot bribe it
It cannot be outwit
It passes never to wait
If you re not on it you re late
It has your life in its hands
It pushes night into day
You cannot push pause, stop, or play
It exists
Ticking on walls and wrists
Its unknown purpose
Limits our mortality
Making death reality
Hushing the commotion
Of the enigma s constant motion

The Upstairs Bedroom Window

Hannah Murphy

My bird flew out the upstairs bedroom one quiet afternoon.
I saw her pause on the window pane,
glance back at me,
and turn her delicate head towards the world.
She decided her cage was too small,
too dull,
too childish.
She didn t want to stay in it anymore.
Today I silently wish that I hadn t let her go.
She was what made my living room special.
Now the living room is quiet,
less colorful,
the walls have become dull.
The cage door remains open,
but that s because I can t seem to close it.

The Runner

Talia Pittman

What if all your dreams came true
You follow your heart and see it through

Then the imagination begins to amuse You figure that once you get everything You have everything to lose.

These thoughts begin to cross your head
So you run and run until your feet have bled

The mind can be so cruel at times
The fear of what we can t see with our eyes

Close your mind and run blind from the actuality
That your imagination can be crueler than reality

Deadline

Barbara Allen Cates

pristine.
static white
without
crossouts
erasure craters
mispunctuations
or
ponderance of muse
Blank paper
tells no story
Or lies.

Untitled

Jessica Becker

I live in a world that is backwards
Where adults act as children and children act as adults
Where things that are deemed bad are right
Yet I come from the normal world
Where adults act as adults and children act as children
Where things that are right are right and things that are wrong are wrong
And I am treated different
And I don t know if it is because I am from this normal place that I am treated different
But when I do things that are wrong in the normal world but are right in this backwards world, I seem to still get in trouble
This is where I am alone
Because the people I want to talk to are adults but act as children
And the people who act as adults are children who are younger and I don t wish to speak to them
I don't seem to quite fit in either world
I am not a child
Yet according to some I am not an adult (even thought I am and do act as one)
And I am not really sure where to go or what to do
I seem to always just be in this limbo land
Live in this backwards world yet from the normal world
Not a child yet not an adult
And no matter what I get placed here in limbo by others
Others who are of authority yet don t know what they are saying or doing
Why must I be punished because of others?

Loneliness

Barbara Allen Cates

Loneliness
steals into the late afternoon shadows
mottling the fading sunlight
and stays long
into the empty black night.

Just Human

Mai Lor

There s a smile
Waiting for us,
On the opposite
End of these melancholies.
Before we go,
What are we waiting
for?

Walk into these
Faraway fine spring days,
Chasing our dreams.
We ve no reasons
To turn back.
Like a boat
In the river,
We walk straight
On.
Should we find it
Tomorrow, we can t
Complain.

This place tattered down
By griefs,
There s a place called
A miracle.
Yet, we spend our

Days searching for
The light of heart,
That only glows
At the end of spring.

We, who, wait for
The morning
To light our path;
Before we can grasp
Onto it,
Stream of droplets
luster and trickles.

Even in loneliness,
We have the
Shimmering moon.
We have to
Fly away with
Featherless wings
Just a bit further.
On the opposite
Shore of sadness,
A powerful
Light helps push
Us through.
To reach that place,
Where the smile waits
For us.

Redemption

Taylor Sferrazza

The wall shattered in a plethora of white dust.
Veins strained as his heart beat faster.
He thought all he had was insatiable disgust
His soul caved to his fears and desires,
It had always been his master.
He had no one he could ever trust,
A life worth nothing, covered in plaster
Void of redemption and second chances,
It was Edged in decay and rust.

. . . . . .

National geographic

Barbara Allen Cates

Brown eyes stare out of crusting lashes
huge
and
unblinking
expression of immobile resignation
to unspoken destiny
Flies
pause
in scavenge of yet unforaged
lifebits
offered
in parasitic consumption
Skeletal ribs beg for release
over abdomen
pregnant
with starvation
Boney legs tuck together
grasshopperlike
shielding private dignities
never enjoyed
His hands folded
palms upward
held
to receive
the handout
that never comes

Leaders

Thomas Edge

Define the world through EYES of those
Who SPEAK though do not see
For it is they who shall lead the willing souls
To DEATH or victory
Take up their JUST cause
Without THINKING for yourself
Blindly strike those WHO would give pause
Don t even consider the world s health

March on to the BATTLE field
Gilded with THE spoken spear
Light the FIRE with those you killed
Hear them preach through false tears

Watch the WORLD burn to cinders
Who BLAMES the muted corpse?
YOU know your battle hinders
Your beliefs were sent through a blender

Define the world through EYES of those
Who SPEAK though do not see
For it is they who shall lead the willing souls
To DEATH or victory

Paper Crane

Mai Lor

The day I met you,
I met the sad fate
Of a lonely, lonely, lonely
Paper crane.

That day, you placed in my hands,
A tiny, tiny, lovely white
Paper crane.
And you said, "there must be
A thousand to become
One real crane."

Your tears that run down
Your rosy soft cheeks,
While you told the story
Of the crane s sorrowful fate.

Our endless love ballad
Became a star in the lonely,
Lonely, starry, misty night sky;
That fell upon my
Painful heart.

The End

Hannah Murphy

You sit and smile.
Flirt for a while.
Tell us how things are meant to be done,
remind all of us that this should be fun,
but the truth is that you re both covering up
this horrific mess that's overflowed like a cup
of coffee,
of tea,
I dare you to whisper another lie to me.
You re trying to appease the masses,
you know what?
Just go shove it up your asses.
Why can t you be honest, be real, and practice what you preach
instead of repeating the useless rules you supposedly teach?
You both kiss in the dark and mix liquid corruption
while you push into her with your almost eruption.
Oh wait, I m sorry, that s a secret of yours,
but what does it matter,
aren t we all just your talented whores?
I know what you ve done
and I ve loathed what you ve said,
and I hate that this was a thirty-five thousand dollar end.

Does that work on other girls?

Katie Barrett

I hate the word "beautiful"
Dribbled so frequently from the sly, sensitive mouths of hipster boys
Reeking of narcissism and insincerity
but in the eyes of a child
whose innocence is still fresh in this stale world
It is in his love and desire for his mother
who is one room over feeling worthless
"Beautiful"

Only True Wishes

Keyon Sands

Grant me a wish without a gift in mind, no strings attached or loop de loops with lines that intertwine. Grant one with non-fiction characteristics but a fiction atmosphere. Something that appeals to the eye but is not noticeable to the stare. Love like this could be a wish, to be magical with every kiss, losing sight of time because the clocks seem not to tick but move in favor of candle-lit evenings and tall tales told while cuddling next to the warmth of the fire. Love like this is a wish; to be mesmerized in brown eyes that grasp you like a new novel amongst your fingertips or internal truth of futures to come. Granting you nothing but love with every handheld kiss of endearment is a wish, accompanied by those slow wave goodbyes or "see ya later alligators," but I'll be standing in the same spot we exited to see your beautiful face on our next hello, a wish to myself when you go.

Art of Piano

Brigitte Tondeur

A young boy sits in a shadowed corner, his knobby knees reach his chest as his arms grasp the skin underneath his legs, and his small head covered with waves of black hair is held in a bowed position. Silver droplets fall onto the concrete pavement of the alley way. His clothes are in disarray: black pants, black dress shoes, an untucked white shirt, and an unbuttoned jacket with a loose tie around his scrawny neck. Dangling from his right hand is an open silver locket hanging from a silver chain, in it is a black and white photo of beautiful woman around the mid-thirties in a flowing white dress, and her long black hair is tied back in a low neat bun. Her eyes are soft and she has a sweet smile; on the other side of the locket is a petal of dark crimson, as if stained by blood, white heather, and a tiny deep blue petal still fresh compared to the others.

The cold of winter fits the boy's mood. Wet snow begins to fall, dusting his hair and clothes. And yet the weather doesn t seem to bother the boy, as if he is immune to the cold, as if something—perhaps a feeling—keeps him warm.

He is a peculiar specimen. All the colors he sees are gray, white, black, and crimson; no colors of happiness, only colors of despair exist in his world, a world of solitude. A world that is strangely comforting, unlike the nightmare he knows as reality. A world that is eternal.

Soft pounding of ivory keys arouses the boy, his deep blue-purple eyes wild with fascination. Quick arpeggios and the smooth rhythm of the music guide him to shelter.

The boy halts at the entrance of the school. The building is modern with large windows, paved walkways, and leafless trees. No one is around. He sighs in disappointment when he can t hear the music, but as he turns his back to the school the piano strikes up once more, even more beautiful and enchanting than the last time. The notes lure him inside the school, each note becoming louder and louder with each step he takes, and the rhythm becomes more graceful. Suddenly, it stops. The boy is at an impasse. Does he go inside the room or does he leave?

However, after a moment of staring at the closed door in front of him, someone opens it. A boy with blonde-red hair and green eyes flood with tears as he races down the deserted hall wearing what appears to be the school uniform: black trousers, white shirt, red tie, and black jacket with the emblem sewed onto the front pocket.

With the door open, as if by invitation,

the boy walks inside and, seeing another boy of medium stature with black flowing hair, wearing the same clothes as the crying boy, he stops still. The other boy says in a harsh tone, "I thought I told you to get out, Ashley. Your crying makes me lose my concentration and you know when I lose my concentration I tend to lose my temper. Now, why for the love of Mozart are you still here?" At that he swivels around on the piano bench, but when he doesn t see Ashley he glares at the boy, his gray-purple eyes inspecting him from top to bottom, fuming. He asks, "What are you doing here? This isn t a recital, but either way I wouldn t have invited a peasant like you. Now, if you may be so kind as to leave me in peace." He turns around flexing his fingers and begins to play Mozart. His long, pale fingers curl over the ivory keys with perfection, and each note he plays is as if an angel is singing. Each rhythm he plays is played with even more emotion than the last, and closing his sad eyes, sways to and fro along with the music.

"I know that piece," the young boy observes politely, "It s Mozart s piano concerto No. 24 played at the andante tempo."

At that the boy playing the piano abruptly stops the piece and instead gives a distasteful minor chord that makes the other boy grimace. "I thought I told you to leave," he says in the same harsh tone as before.

"I know," the other boy says timidly, "But I was enchanted by the music. The way your fingers moved on the keys sounded like an angel, or a gentle stream flowing down a mountain."

Wanting to look the other boy in the eye, he twists his head and says, as if he has a change of heart, "We have the same eye color." He smiles.

"And the same hair," the other boy observes, his cheeks turning a rosy red.

"Are we siblings?"

"Impossible. I ve never met you in my entire life."

"How old are you?"

The other boy stares at the floor.

"I know it s a personal question. You don t have to answer it if you don t want to."

"No," the boy answers, "I want to. I m thirteen."

"Ha," the boy sitting at the piano laughs, "We re the same age. I m the year of the Rooster."

"No wonder you have a flamboyant character," the boy says underneath his breath.

"Did you say something?"

"No."The boy stands up and comments, "You need to eat more. And why wear those shabby clothes, they don't fit you."

"What?" the other boy asks skeptically.

The dark haired boy comes closer and sticking out his right hand out and comments, "We re the same height." He grins as if he has something up his sleeve. "Come, its getting late. School has been over for hours." He begins to walk toward the door.

"Wait," the other boy says, "Is it alright to leave without your friend?"

"Oh," he answers stopping in his tracks, "You mean Ashley. He'll be fine. He most likely went home. Besides, he cries too much for my liking, but as least he has good taste in music."

"Is that why you like me, because of my taste of music?"

The dark-haired boy shrugs. "I m Charles. Coming?"

The other boy nods and walks toward the door, there, he says, "I m James."

Once Charles closes the door, they begin to walk down the hallway.
In the cold their new friendship keeps them warm as they walk side by side on the pristine path.

After a few moments of silence, they put their hands in their pockets to keep them warm, Charles says, "You sure have a musical mind to know the name of my favorite classical piece from my favorite composer. Did you study the art of piano?

"No," James answers, and as if by impulse he places his left hand on the cold silver locket, "My mother…she used to play the piano when I was little—four or five I think. She would always put me on her lap and say, Remember my dear child that Mozart will lead you home, even when I am not there. But I will always be in your heart watching over you…"

" I am your guardian angel," Charles finishes the sentence for him.

James nods and unclasps the precious locket from behind his neck and opens it asking, "Do you remember her, Mother?"

Charles scrutinizes the photograph and after a moment he answers, "Yes, I remember now. Mother would play the piano so beautifully like…"

"Like an angel," James finishes for him.

"Precisely James," Charles confirms, "Mother would only play Mozart because she believed his music enhanced your senses, especially your mind."

"A better way to describe it would be like a waterfall, each note growing livelier and livelier until it breaks at the rocks severing the connection."

Charles grins. "You should become a poet, James." But quickly his expression becomes remorse. "But then there was a fire and Mother perished in the flames alongside the piano. It's fitting really. She loved us, but she cherished her Mozart."

James nods as if remembering that day. The day he lost everything: his home,

his family, his music. Since that day, he only wore mourning clothes, and he never laughed again. After him and his brother separated those many years ago, James has been living in the streets.

"Here," Charles hands him another locket, bringing James back to the present, "Take it and open it."

After putting his own locket back on, James takes the other one and opens it. Inside he sees a photograph of Mother at the piano, little James on her lap, and on the piano bench next to them sits little Charles; all three of them were smiling. On the piano James can clearly make out the sheet music and the lettering of the title "Concerto No. 21 Andante." On the other side of the locket are the same three petals as in his: a crimson rose, white heather, and a blue forget-me-not petal. James closes the locket thoughtfully and gives it back.

"Well," Charles asks as he pockets it, "What do you think?"

"I believe we are indeed brothers." James gives him a faint smile.

Charles grins back. "I m glad you are back."

They embrace.

"So am I," James says through tears, "So am I."

"Why are you crying?"

"These tears that I shed are out of joy, not sadness," James explains

That night, after they ate supper James lays next his brother. His eyes are closed, fast asleep. In his dreams he can now see colors. Magnificent hues of blues and greens, as the sunlight touch them they transform into graceful purple-blue butterflies spreading their happiness and love. In the background he can see the waterfall and Mother playing it beautifully with the tips of her wings so as to not to lose balance. Mother halts and kisses the brothers on their soft heads whispering, "Welcome home my darlings. You have mastered the art of piano. Now you are ready to let go your past and fly on you own wings."

Tina Turner

Maigan Kennedy

I have always suffered from white guilt. As a young WASP in the heart of Durham County, all I ever wanted was to be brown like all my friends. When I would blow out the candles on my birthday cake, I would wish to be brown. As I was tying things up at the end of my evening prayers, I would add, "and God, please make me black, or at least very, very tan." Shooting stars, fallen eyelashes, broken wishbones, crossed fingers and blown dandelions all took me a few steps closer to my pigment paradise. I even secretly believed that Jesus was a brown person, even though my family thought he was white and probably from Virginia.

I was Princess Jasmine for Halloween when I was 5 and Pocahontas at age 6. For Halloween the year I was 7, I was determined to be Tina Turner. My mom got me an amazingly terrible blonde wig that we spent hours spiking with AquaNet hairspray. I glued on my neon orange acrylics from the Dollar Tree with pride. I applied bright blue eye shadow, an ungodly amount of rouge and lined my lips with a sticky purple gloss. I donned my acid-washed ripped jeans, tiny black kitten heels, my mother's Def Leppard shirt that had seen better days, and my step-dad's motorcycle jacket, which swallowed me whole. Last to the ensemble, I added my pink plastic microphone covered with stickers of Ariel

from The Little Mermaid (whose skin was shaded brown with crayon). With all my Tina accoutrements, I was fit to bursting with pride, but when I looked in the mirror, my heart sank. Something was missing.

I still wasn t black.

I was furious. How was this possible? I was dressed exactly like Tina! I even had the hair and the nails and the expression of sultry ferocity (or so I imagined; at 7, I probably just looked constipated from too many Gogurts). This was unacceptable and I wouldn t stand for it. Finally, I realized that God must have been delaying my darkening, so I decided to take matters into my own hands.

I found a canister of dark brown shoe polish.

Ten minutes later, and all visible areas of my body covered in a toxic brown sheen, I emerged from my room as a proud black woman, wailing, "What s Love Got To Do With It?"

Needless to say, my parents did not let me go trick r treating. They made me stay home and take a bath, and worked out a chore chart to pay for getting shoe polish stains out of my carpet and the motorcycle jacket. I cried and cried and cried. My parents thought I was sad because I wouldn t get to sink into a sugar coma that night like all my friends, but I was sobbing over the loss of my new-found ethnicity.

My parents felt guilty enough to go to Wal-Mart and buy a bag of mini Snickers for me, and I sat on the couch watching Sanford and Son reruns. I felt a little better after a while, and then got another idea in my head..

What would I look like with a Jheri Curl? I began to plot how to get my mom s scissors and a perm kit the very next week.

Because, by God, I was determined to be black. Or at least very, very tan.

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William Peace University

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